

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUDAPEST 0702

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SOPN, HU

SUBJ: HUNGARIAN VISA PROBLEM: NY TIMES

CORRESPONDENT MALCOLM BROWNE

1. NYT CORRESPONDENT MALCOLM BROWNE TELEPHONED DCM FROM BELGRADE MARCH 12 TO ADVISE THAT HUNGARIAN EMBASSY INFORMED HIM HIS VISA APPLICATION TO COVER UPCOMING HSWP CONGRESS BEGINNING MARCH 17 IN BUDAPEST WAS DENIED.
2. DCM REQUESTED APPOINTMENT WITH AMBASSADOR VARKONYI AT MFA FOR AFTERNOON MARCH 13 ON SUBJECT, AND IS NOW SET FOR MARCH 14 AT 10:00 A.M. PAO HAS APPOINTMENT WITH MFA PRESS SECTION CHIEF AMBASSADOR JENO RANDE AT 1600 HRS MARCH 13 ON SAME SUBJECT. PURPOSE OF BOTH CALLS WILL BE TO SEEK CLARIFICATION ON WHETHER INFORMATION BROWNE RECEIVED ON VISA DENIAL IS CORRECT, AND, IF SO, REQUEST THAT DECISION BE REEXAMINED IN VIEW OF USG CONCERN THAT CASE AND ITS INEVITABLE DISCUSSION IN US MEDIA COULD HAVE UNFAVORABLE IMPACT ON BILATERAL RELATIONS.
3. FYI EARLIER DISCUSSIONS IN MFA PRESS SECTION INDICATED THAT RECENT SERIES OF BROWNE ARTICLES
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CAUSED AT LEAST SOME CIRCLES IN GOH CONSIDERABLE

DISCOMFORT. MORE SERIOUS IN MFA VIEW WAS FACT THAT BROWNE REFERRED TO A CC BRIEFING FOR HUNGARIAN EDITORS AS SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON ENERGY PRICE INCREASES. THEY WERE CLEARLY DISMAYED THAT REFERENCE TO THESE BRIEFINGS APPEARED IN NYT AND CONSIDERED THIS A VIOLATION OF THEIR QUOTE UNWRITTEN RULES OF THE GAME UNQUOTE. END FYI.

4. COMMENT: WHATEVER MFA VIEWS MAY BE ON BROWNE'S REFERENCE TO THIS PARTICULAR SOURCE, EMBASSY CONSIDERS THAT DENIAL OF VISA AND ATTENDANT EFFECTS ON BILATERAL RELATIONS AND ATMOSPHERE OF DETENTE CLEARLY UNFORTUNATE AND UNWARRANTED. EMBOFFS. WILL STRESS THESE POINTS IN MFA MEETINGS WITH AIM OF OBTAINING FAVORABLE RECONSIDERATION OF VISA APPLICATION. END COMMENT.

5. OUTCOME MFA DISCUSSIONS WILL BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY.

6. WE BELIEVE BROWNE NOT FILING ON THIS UNTIL WE HAVE CHANCE TO GET FINAL GOH VIEW. IF ARTICLE SHOULD APPEAR, AND ONLY IF ASKED, BELIEVE MOST DEPT. SHOULD SAY IS THAT IT HAD HEARD SUCH REPORT AND THAT EMB. IS INQUIRING INTO FACTS.
PEDERSEN

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NNN

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